

## **Topic 5**

## **The Transition Planning Conference**

The Transition Planning Conference is intended to be an introductory meeting between the LEA (school system) and the parents/guardian as well as a time for exchanging information. It is a time to share progress on the IFSP outcomes and develop a plan for transitioning from early intervention services to the school system or other services your child might receive at age three. It is scheduled by the child's service coordinator to exchange current information among the LEA, the service coordinator, and the parent/guardian so that appropriate services will begin on the child's third birthday. By providing the LEA representative with the child profile booklet, "I'm Getting Ready for Preschool" (see Topic 4) at this time, persons in the school system are able to learn more about the child and the services he/she may need. The LEA representative facilitates the Transition Planning Conference.

When transition planning begins nine (9) months prior to the child's third (3<sup>rd</sup>) birthday, IFSP teams have sufficient time to work with the LEA to determine Part B (school system) eligibility, and develop and implement an IEP by the child's third (3<sup>rd</sup>) birthday. In addition, if the child is not eligible for Part B, the IFSP team will have sufficient time to refer the child to other agencies for other appropriate services. If the IEP team agrees that the child is NOT eligible for special education and related services, then the service coordinator can help find other community early childhood opportunities for the child. The school district may also be able to provide parents with ideas about other opportunities available in their community. Some of these options may include Head Start, day care, mothers' day out programs, play groups, library story hour, etc.

### **Materials**

- "Contact Person List"
- "Participating as a Member of the Transition Team: Being Part of the Transition Team"
- Any Conference LEA forms the parent is to bring with them to the Transition Planning
- *Steps to Success* (TEIS publication)

### **A. The Transition Planning Conference**

#### **When is the Transition Planning Conference held?**

The Transition Planning Conference is held no later than 90 days prior to the child's third birthday, but can be held as early as nine months before the third birthday. The parent must receive written notice of this meeting 7-10 days before the meeting date. This notice should contain the following information: day, time and place of meeting, and who will be in attendance. If the day, time or place of the meeting is not convenient for the parent, the parent has the right to request that a change be made so that he/she will be able to attend.

#### **Who must attend the Transition Planning Conference?**

1. Parent
2. Service Coordinator
3. LEA Representative
4. TEIS Representative ( usually the service coordinator as well)

**Who may attend?**

1. Service Provider Representatives
2. Other support persons as invited by the parent/guardian, usually a family member or friend familiar with the child and family

**At the Transition Planning Conference you will discuss:**

1. Rights of children with disabilities and parent responsibilities
2. Hopes and dreams for the child
3. Progress of the IFSP goals
4. Information that may be necessary to later determine if the child would be eligible for possible services available in the community when the child turns three years old.
5. Types of information and experiences needed to help decide appropriate services for the child (including child profile booklet, "I'm Getting Ready for Preschool" (see page 4-3).
6. Information about services available through the school system
7. The application and/or referral process for program options
8. Arrangements for the parents to visit programs if applicable
9. The process for exchange of information and records (i.e., medical, educational, evaluations)
10. Transportation

It is the responsibility of the LEA (school system representative) to:

- Participate in the IFSP Transition Planning Conference
- Explain Part B Rights (school system) to the family
- Describe the process for Part B eligibility determination
- Review the IEP process and explain possible service options.
- Meet as a team to determine eligibility and if eligible,
- Develop and sign the IEP by the child's third (3<sup>rd</sup>) birthday.
- An IEP must be in place by the child's third (3<sup>rd</sup>) birthday even if that birthday falls during the summer months. TEIS and school districts should work together to plan spring transition meetings whenever possible. School districts will need to be prepared for summer transition meetings.

**Sample Activities for the Early Interventionist and Family:**

1. Review page 2 of *Steps to Success* booklet with the family.
2. Role play a Transition Planning Conference with the family.
3. Have the parent look up the number for that school district and call and ask if there are any forms to complete and bring with them to the Transition Planning Conference. If necessary, assist the parent in completing those forms as soon as they are received. Follow up on this.
4. Discuss the handout, "Participating as a Member of the Transition Team." (see page 5-3).
5. During the next visit with the family after the Transition Planning Conference, discuss the results with the family and request questions.

**Family Follow-Up:**

1. Have family complete the child profile booklet (see p. 4-3) if not already finished and have copies made.
2. Take any LEA- requested forms, the "Contact Person List" (see page 5-4), and the "child profile booklet to the Transition Planning Conference

## Participating as a Member of the Transition Team: Being Part of the Transition Team

Working as a team member with other professionals can sometimes be threatening to families and can require some time and know-how. Building a relationship takes time, effort, trust, mutual respect, and communication. Here are some additional tips for working on a team that may help both families and professionals work together as they plan for transition.

- **Treat each member of the team as an equal.** Remember that each team member brings different expertise, values, and resources to the meeting.
- **Seek information.** It is okay to say "I don't know," "I don't understand," or to ask for assistance or for more information.
- **Share information that will help team members understand your concerns and priorities.** Do not be afraid to state your opinion, answer questions, and discuss your priorities.
- **Share thoughts and feelings about your child's abilities.**
- **Be honest, clear, and direct about your child's needs and your family's concerns, resources, and priorities.**
- **Remember that differences of opinion are okay and are to be expected.** Team meetings are an opportunity to listen to all points of view and to make decisions using negotiation and problem solving.
- **Try to avoid letting past negative experiences influence your current behavior and interactions with members of the team.**
- **Listen to each member of the team.** Try to identify the reasons for their needs or recommendations.
- **Invite other family members or friends who can offer support and advice to attend transition team meetings.**
- **Be sure you are satisfied with decisions that are made before agreeing to them.** If you are not satisfied, be sure to talk to the rest of the team about it.
- **Select a level of team involvement that you are comfortable with and that fits your schedule.**
- **Generate multiple suggestions to address each issue discussed and identify the pros and cons of all suggestions before selecting one.**
- **Carry through on tasks that you have agreed to do.**

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(FACTS/LRE grants permission for photocopying of this handout.)

# Contact Person List

(This blank form is intended for families to record contact information during meetings.)

Name and Title	Name of Organization	Address/Telephone Number/E-mail	Notes

(Note: A completed contact person list may also be developed and given at meetings.)

**Adapted from AHEAD, Utah State University, Logan Utah 1997**

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